NUMB. CCCXXII.

The SPECTATOR.

—Ad humum mœrore gravi deducit & angit. Hor.

Monday, March 10. 1712.

It is often ſaid, after a Man has heard a Story with extraordinary Circumſtances, it is a very good one if it be true: But as for the following Relation, I ſhould be glad were I ſure it is falſe. It is told with ſuch Simplicity, and there are ſo many artleſs Touches of Diſtreſs in it, I fear it comes too much from the Heart.

MR. SPECTATOR,

SOME Years ago it happened that I lived in the ſame Houſe with a young Gentleman of Merit; with whoſe good Qualities I was ſo much taken, as to make my Endeavour to ſhew as many as I was able in my ſelf. Familiar Converſe improved general Civilities into an unfeigned Paſſion on both Sides. He watched an Opportunity to declare himſelf to me; and I, who could not expect a Man of ſo great an Eſtate as his, received his Addreſſes in ſuch Terms as gave him no Reaſon to believe I was diſpleaſed with them, tho' I did nothing to make him think me more eaſy than was decent. His Father was a very hard worldly Man, and proud; ſo that there was no Reaſon to believe he would eaſily be brought to think there was any thing in any Woman's Perſon or Character could ballance the Diſadvantage of unequal Fortune. In the mean Time the Son continued his Application to me, and omitted no Occaſion of demonſtrating the moſt diſintereſted Paſſion imaginable to me; and in plain direct Terms offer'd to marry me privately, and keep it ſecret till he ſhould be ſo happy as to gain his Father's Approbation, or become poſſeſſed of his Eſtate. I paſſionately loved him, and you will believe I could not deny ſuch a one what was my Intereſt alſo to grant. However I was not ſo young as not to take the Precaution of carrying with me a faithful Servant, who had been alſo my Mother's Maid, to be preſent at the Ceremony.—When that was over, I demanded a Certificate, ſigned by the Miniſter, my Husband, and the Servant I have now ſpoke of. After our Nuptials we continued together very familiarly in the ſame Houſe; but the Reſtraints we were generally under; and the Interviews we had being ſtolen and interrupted, made our Behaviour to each other have rather the impatient Fondneſs which is viſible in Lovers, than the regular and gratified Affection which is to be obſerved in Man and Wife. This Obſervation made the Father very anxious for his Son, and preſs him to a Match he had in his Eye for him. To relieve my Husband from this Importunity, and conceal the Secret of our Marriage, which I had Reaſon to know would not be long in my Power in Town, it was reſolved that I ſhould retire into a remote Place in the Counrry, and converſe under feigned Names by Letter. We long continued this Way of Commerce; and I with my Needle, a few Books, and reading over and over my Husband's Letters, paſſed my Time in a reſigned Expectation of better Days. Be pleaſed to take Notice, that within four Months after I left my Husband I was delivered of a Daughter, who died within few Hours after her Birth. This Accident, and the retired Manner of Life I lead, gave criminal Hopes to a neighbouring Brute of a Country Gentleman, whoſe Folly was the Source of all my Affliction. This Ruſtick is one of thoſe rich Clowns, who ſupply the want of all manner of Breeding by the Neglect of it, and with noiſy Mirth, half Underſtanding, and ample Fortune, force themſelves upon Perſons and things without any Senſe of Time or Place. The poor ignorant People where I lay concealed, and now paſſed for a Widow, wondered I could be ſo ſhy and ſtrange, as they called it, to the Squire; and were bribed by him to admit him whenever he thought fit. I happened to be ſitting in a little Parlour which belonged to my own Part of the Houſe, and muſing over one of the fondeſt of my Husband's Letters, in which I always kept the Certificate of my Marriage, when this rude Fellow came in, and with the nauſeous Familiarity of ſuch unbred Brutes, ſnatched the Papers out of my Hand. I was immediately under ſo great a Concern, that I threw my ſelf at his Feet, and begged of him to return them. He, with the ſame odious Pretence

to

to Freedom and Gayety, swore he would read them. I grew more importunate, he more curious, till at last, with an Indignation arising from a Passion I then first discovered in him, he threw the Paper into the Fire, swearing that since he was not to read them, the Man who writ them should never be so happy as to have me read them over again. It is insignificant to tell you my Tears and Reproaches made the boisterous Calf leave the Room ashamed and out of Countenance, when I had leisure to ruminate on this Accident with more than ordinary Sorrow: However such was then my Confidence in my Husband, that I writ to him the Misfortune, and desired another Paper of the same Kind. He deferred writing two or three Posts, and at last answered me in general, That he could not then send what I asked for, but when he could find a proper Conveyance, I should be sure to have it: From this Time his Letters were more cold every Day than other, and as he grew indifferent I grew jealous. This has at last brought me to Town, where I find both the Witnesses of my Marriage dead, and that my Husband, after three Months Cohabitation, has buried a young Lady whom he married in Obedience to his Father. In a Word, he shuns and disowns me: Should I come to the House and confront him, the Father would join in supporting him against me, though he belived my Story. Should I talk it to the World, what Reparation can I expect for an Injury I cannot make out? I believe he means to bring me, through Necessity, to resign my Pretentions to him for some Provision for my Life; but I will dye first. Pray bid him remember what he said, and how he was charmed when he laughed at the heedless Discovery I often made of my self; let him remember how awkard I was in my dissembled Indifference towards him before Company; ask him how I, who could never conceal my Love for him, at his own Request, can part with him for ever? Oh, Mr. SPECTATOR, Sensible Spirits know no Indifference in Marriage; what then do you think is my piercing Affliction----- I leave you to represent my Distress your own Way, in which I desire you to be speedy, if you have Compassion for Innocence exposed to Infamy.

Octavia.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

By Her Majesty's Company of Comedians.

AT the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, this present Monday, being the 10th Day of March, will be presented a Comedy call'd, The Fair Quaker of Deal; or, The Humours of the Navy. By her Majesty's Command no Persons are to be admitted behind the Scenes,

This Play is sold by Jacob Tonson at Shakespear's-Head, over against Katherine-street in the Strand.

A most extraordinary Collection of Capital Pictures by Rubens, Guido Reni, Benedetto Castiglione, Claude Lorrain, Luca Jordano, Gaspar Poussin, Wovermans, and other excellent Masters, lately brought into England by Mr. Gouge, will be sold by Auction, at his Dwelling House at the Golden Head in the Little-Piazza in Covent Garden, on Thursday the 13th Instant; where Catalogues may be had, and the Pictures seen, this Day, to Morrow, and Wednesday.

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Notice is hereby given, that at Mr. William Watkins's Mountain Vault in Queen's Head Yard near the Bagnio in St. James's street, is sold by Retale excellent Mountain-Malaga Wine at 6 s. 8d. per Gallon or 1 s. 9 d. per Quart; being a Parcel, just landed, and of the best Growth in Spain.

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Just publish'd,

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Just published,

A very neat Pocket Edition of the SPECTATOR in 2 Vol. 12o. Printed for Sam. Buckley at the Dolphin in Little-Britain, and J. Tonson at Shakespear's Head over-against Catherine-street in the Strand.

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